

FRADLEY POOL NATURE RESERVE

As an extension to your walk, why not enjoy a leisurely stroll around the award winning Fradley Pool Nature Reserve? Try wildlife spotting from inside the stunning bird hide, or discover the tree sculptures and pond dipping platforms (suitable for wheelchair access and pushchairs).

Fradley Pool Nature Reserve reveals another dimension in the history of the canal age and is physical evidence of the feud between the two local canal companies.

Water is a vital resource in any canal system and the Trent and Mersey Canal Company did not want to lose any of their excess water to the Coventry Canal. Subsequently they set about diverting the water via an overflow weir and channel around the Junction. The reservoir was built in the 1780s to hold this surplus water until it was required, when it could be released into the canal at one of the two points either side of Keepers Lock.

In recent years the reservoir site has been classified as a Site of Biological Importance for the floral composition of the woodland and lake, the dead wood and associated invertebrates. 'The Peoples Gateway to Nature' Project has transformed this already amazing site into a nature reserve with access through the multitude of habitats, all naturally formed around this canal feature.

Pick up a Fradley Pool Nature Detectives Pack from the British Waterways Information Centre.

Tree sculptures, carved using chainsaws, by artists from Stevenage, pools and benches add interest around the reservoir, including a recycled plastic boardwalk suitable for wheelchair access. Other features include gateways and willow weave panels designed by local school children under the guidance of a Greenwood Artist from Nuneaton.

The bird hide was constructed and thatched by Raffles Garden Buildings, a small business based in Overseal. It uses a mixture of native woods grown in this country including some branches found around Fradley Pool. Its situation offers panoramic views over the reservoir – an ideal bird watching platform.



Pond Dipping Platforms

Two platforms project into the reservoir's main water body to offer the best opportunities to hunt for aquatic invertebrates and also act as viewing platforms. Both designs allow safe access to the water's edge and have small ledges on which to place any trays so that the 'discoveries' can be scrutinised safely and at close quarters.



HISTORY

Fradley Junction is the point at which the Coventry Canal joins the Trent and Mersey Canal. Josiah Wedgwood, the famous potter proposed the build of the canal from the Trent to the Mersey.



The Swan Public House, Fradley Junction 1954



British Waterways, Fradley Yard, 1961

Starting in 1766, it took 11 years to dig five tunnels and to complete the canal. The Coventry Canal took longer as financial constraints halted the construction. It took the intervention of both the Trent and Mersey and the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal Companies to complete the canal to Fradley Junction.

The Junction has always been popular with boaters and has supported a hive of activity based upon life on the canal for the past two centuries. At the junction there is a group of listed buildings including the Swan Inn Public House, cottages and a small warehouse. The adjacent crossover bridge and locks are also listed buildings.

The Coventry Canal Company, a partnership created to build and ultimately run the canal for profit, had premises and a toll house situated directly on the Junction. Previously sold, it is now a residential property with a garage in which the brickwork of the original toll house can be seen.

The original wharf, including the once redundant stables, carpenters' and blacksmith shop have been converted into a café, gift shop and Information Centre. The latest changes to these buildings reflect the increased demand for leisure facilities and new life for the Junction.



A MAP AND GUIDE TO Walks around Fradley Junction



WELCOME TO FRADLEY JUNCTION

Fradley Junction, near Lichfield is the meeting point of the Trent & Mersey and Coventry Canals and one of the most picturesque waterside scenes in the Midlands.

These 4 walks around Fradley Junction are on towpaths (permissive access) and public footpaths through fields, with some sections on roads. There are several stiles and narrow gates and some hilly sections. Conditions underfoot can be muddy after wet weather

When you have finished your circular walk, why not take a break for some well earned refreshments at the canalside café. The British Waterways shop and Information Centre is an ideal place for purchasing souvenirs or finding out more information on other attractions in the local area and the canal system.

All around Fradley Junction there is an abundance of wildlife to be found. Kingfishers, Herons, Moorhens and Great Crested Grebes are common. While walking on the Coventry Canal towpath, you could hear Green



Woodpeckers between the junction and bridge 90 or you might even be lucky enough to spot a Grey or Yellow Wagtail close to the locks.

- Please note that times and distances given are approximate.
- Park in the British Waterways pay and display car park.
- Located off the A38 between Lichfield and Burton-upon-Trent. Follow signs for Fradley Park and then follow brown and white signs for Fradley Junction.



ALREWEAS

Why not spend some time in Alrewas which has a wide main street with a remarkable number of 16th Century houses, with black beams, white walls and thatched roofs.

These are a reminder of ancient times when basket weaving was a thriving cottage industry, using the osiers which grew so plentifully on the banks of the river Trent. The A38, the old Roman Ryneild Street, on the east side, separates the village from the National Memorial Arboretum. The Arboretum has been planted on reclaimed land as a living tribute to the people of the Twentieth Century.

The 150 acre site has a wide selection of young trees linked to many historic groups as well as a developing wildlife site based on the River Tame and its adjacent lakes. The Visitor Centre houses the only Chapel built in Britain to celebrate the second Millennium.

Close by is Croxall Lakes Nature Reserve, where large numbers of wildfowl and wading birds are attracted to the 104 acre site.

LICHFIELD

Three and a half miles from Fradley Junction is Lichfield City, a premier Heritage City, justly proud of its past.

The magnificent three spired Cathedral and the beautiful Close with its elegant buildings overlooking Minster and Stowe Pools or the city centre with its medieval grid pattern streets and 18th Century Georgian buildings, all provide a glimpse into Lichfield's history.

Lichfield has sat through wars, plagues, fires and the Industrial Revolution to become the thriving and exciting city of today.



Photographs by kind permission of Lichfield District Council



INFORMATION

For further information on West Midlands Waterways, please contact

West Midlands Waterways
Peel's Wharf, Fazeley,
Tamworth, Staffs B78 30Z
T 01827 252000

E enquiries.westmidlands@britishwaterways.co.uk

Follow the Waterways Code!

- Look after your waterways
- Consider others
- Take care

Contact British Waterways for a copy of the Waterways Code Leaflet giving more advice on how to stay SAFE near the water.

Lichfield Tourist Information and Box Office
Lichfield Garrick, Castle Dyke, Lichfield WS13 6HR
T 01543 412112
F 01543 412120
E info@visitlichfield.co.uk
www.visitlichfield.co.uk

For Information on Guides Walks and Tours with a Green Badge Guide - contact

Lichfield Travel Trade Officer
Visit Lichfield
Donegal House, Bore Street, Lichfield WS13 6NE
T 01543 308216
F 01543 308211



You can find comprehensive information on Britain's waterways online at www.waterscape.com including route-planners, holiday hire, listings of nearby pubs, events, attractions and places to visit.

This leaflet is available in alternative formats on request.

WALK 1

Distance 8.9km, 5miles
Time 2hrs leisurely

Leave the British Waterways car park and walk left alongside the shop and information centre with the canal on your right to Br 51. Cross over the bridge, turn left and continue along the towpath of the Trent & Mersey Canal to Br 55. Look out for Yellow Wagtails as you pass Shadehouse and Middle Lock.

At Br 55, leave the towpath by the steps and turn left into Shaw Lane. At the T Junction turn right and continue along Shaw Lane to the main road. Cross this road (caution, fast traffic) to join Common Lane. Continue along Common Lane to a Crossroads.

Turn right, go through a bridle gate and continue down this farm track until you reach a stile at the end. Cross the stile and continue straight across the field to a gap in the hedge. Look out for foxes along the way. Cross the wooden bridge over the stream and continue to the fork in the road. Turn left and just before the farm buildings turn right again and walk along the gravel drive with the farm house on your left until you reach a finger post.

Turn right and walk diagonally across the field to a stile in the corner. Cross the stile and continue straight across the field to another 2 stiles. Cross these stiles and follow the well used path through the woods with the caravan park on your right to a gap in the hedge into a garden. Cross the garden diagonally and continue along the drive to the left of the cottages until you reach the canal. Cross over Br 51 to return to the car park.



WALK 2

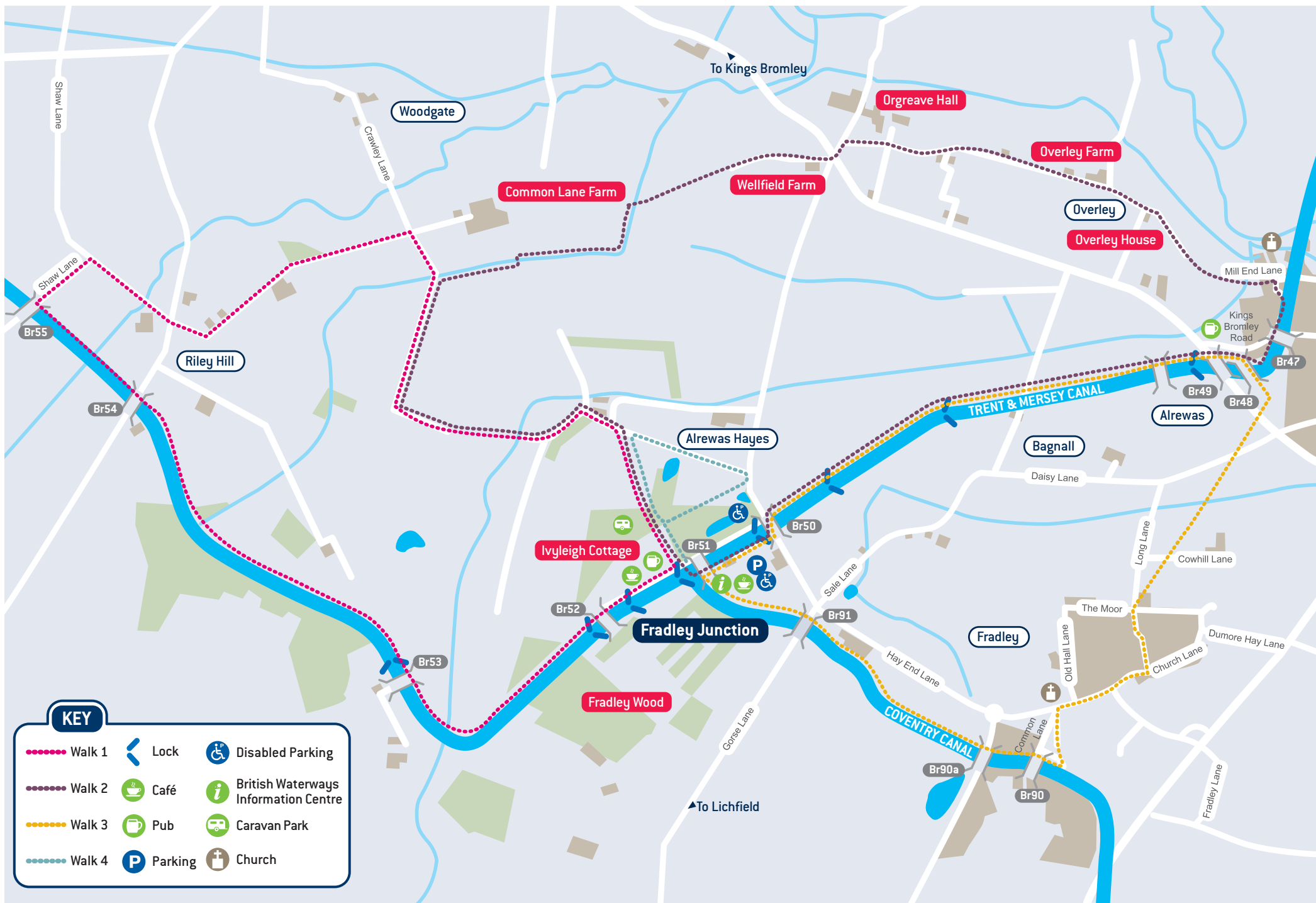
Distance 9.9km, 6miles
Time 3hrs leisurely

Leave the British Waterways car park and walk left alongside the shop and information centre with the canal on your right to Br 51. Opposite Br 51, walk away from the canal along a driveway, keeping to the right of Ivyleigh Cottage. Go half left across the grass to the far corner of the garden and follow a well used path through the woodland with the caravan park on your left.

Cross the 2 stiles at the end of the wood, and go straight across the field to the stile ahead. Cross the stile and then walk diagonally across in the direction of the farmhouse. Turn left on to the gravel drive and continue with the farmhouse on your right to a fork in the drive. Keep left and walk along this road to a concrete farm track. Turn left and continue to the fork in the track. Keep right and follow to the gap in the hedge. Cross the wooden bridge then go straight across the field ahead, keeping slightly left, to a stile. Cross the stile and follow this farm track to a bridle gate on the bend by a Pine tree.

Go right into the field through the bridle gate and continue straight ahead with the hedge on your left through 2 further bridle gates into the adjoining field. Turn right and continue around the edge of this field with the brook on your right through 2 more bridle gates into an adjoining field.

Continue straight ahead with the hedge on your left. Where the hedge ends, join a farm track and continue along this track until you reach the main road.



..... Walk 1	Lock	Disabled Parking
..... Walk 2	Café	British Waterways Information Centre
..... Walk 3	Pub	Caravan Park
..... Walk 4	Parking	Church

Cross the road (caution, fast traffic) and continue for a short distance up the drive towards Orgreave Hall. Go right through the smaller of the two wrought iron gates and continue with Orgreave Hall on your left to a bend in the road. Bear right on to a grassy lane and continue with the Gas Plant on your right to a bend in the road.

Bear left just before Overlay House on to the grassy lane and continue to the stile at the end. Cross the stile and follow the well used path with the barbed wire fence on your left to another stile. Cross the stile and follow another well used path with the hedge on your right to a stile in the corner of the field. Cross the stile, continue with the stream on your right, over a concrete bridge, until you reach the road ahead.

Turn right and continue into Church Road. Turn right and continue to the bend with Alrewas Church of All Saints on your left. Cross the road and join the towpath through a gate in the black iron railings on the left. Turn right and follow the towpath back to bridge 50. Cross over the bridge (caution, fast traffic), turn right and walk down the gravel path to the car park.



WALK 3

Distance 7.4km, 4miles
Time 2hrs leisurely

Leave the British Waterways car park, turn right and walk up the gravelled footpath to Keepers Lock. Cross the road (caution, fast traffic) and continue along the canal towpath as far as Bagnall Lock. Cross over the canal at Br 49.

Now go straight ahead, in front of the garages, and turn left at the end along a narrow path to enter the playing ground. Follow the rails marking the boundary of the playing ground, around to the right, past the pavilion. Walk down the right hand side of the car park to a gap in the corner and then follow the solid fence all around the side of the houses.

Turn left down a narrow alleyway and continue to a stile at the end. Cross the stile onto the roadside and then cross the road (caution, fast traffic). Go over the stile in front. Cross the field diagonally towards the top left hand corner to cross a stile in the hedge just before the field corner on to the road.

Turn right and walk along the road for 40 yards, then go left through the kissing gate alongside the Horse Chestnut tree. Follow the well marked path diagonally across the field to

another stile in the hedge ahead. Cross and continue in the same direction to go through the hedge ahead over a small concrete bridge. Now walk down the edge of the field, with the hedge on your left, finally crossing through the hedge ahead in front of a white painted house, onto a track. Turn right, and after a few yards go left over a stile. Walk across the field diagonally and cross the stile in front. Continue in the same direction following the well marked path to the corner of the field, then cross the stile to the left of the gate into Long Lane.

Turn left and walk down the lane to the give way sign. Continue straight over this junction with Dunmore Hay Lane (caution, fast traffic) to a T Junction by the post office. Turn right at this junction and continue, ignoring all turn offs, as far as the village church and school. At this point cross the road and go left through the smaller gate of Heath Gap Farm and continue down the sign-posted driveway. After passing in front of the house, go through the right hand of the two gates, and continue with the hedge on your left to a gravel drive. Continue along the gravel drive in front of the cottages, then through the gap in the hedge on to the canal towpath. Turn right and follow the canal back to Fradley Junction.

Turn right at the junction and follow the towpath back to the car park. Listen out for the Green Woodpecker in the woodland between Bridge 90 and the junction.



WALK 4

Distance 2.2km, 1mile
Time 1hr leisurely

Leave the British Waterways car park and walk left alongside the shop and information centre with the canal on your right to Br 51. Opposite Br 51, walk away from the canal along a driveway, keeping to the right of Ivyleigh Cottage. Go half left across the grass to the far corner of the garden and follow a well used path through the woodland with the caravan park on your left.

Cross the 2 stiles at the end of the wood, and go straight across the field to the stile ahead. Cross the stile and then walk diagonally across the field in the direction of the farmhouse.

Turn right and continue along this farm drive. Before reaching the cottages and the road, turn right and cross the field diagonally up a hill, to a wooden gate in the corner. Go through the gate and follow with the fence on your left to two stiles.

Cross the stiles and follow the well used path through the woods with the caravan park on your right to a gap in the hedge into a garden. Cross the garden diagonally and continue along the drive to the left of the cottages until you reach the canal. Cross over Br 51 to return to the car park.



COUNTRYSIDE CODE

- Be safe – plan ahead and **please keep strictly to the waymarked path**
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people